



« [Lloyds of London takes on nanotechnology](#)
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[Nanotechnology for surveillance vs. privacy](#)

Nanowerk [brings](#) our attention to a [story at Forbes.com](#) looking at anticipated developments in sensing and monitoring:

At their annual meeting this fall in Montreal, there was little of the traditional talk among the international privacy people about the nuts and bolts of data protection. Instead, there were urgent and distressed discussions about “uberveillance,” “ambient technology,” “ubiquitous computing,” “ingestible bugs” and nanotechnology.

The terms may be overlapping and may in fact be somewhat synonymous.

What is uberveillance?

Michael G. Michael, a theologian and technology historian at the University of Wollongong, in New South Wales, Australia, says that he originated the term *uberveillance* to describe the new environment. The stem “uber” means “over” or “super” in German. He thinks the pervasive monitoring will lead to increased cases of insanity and mental distress. “Mental illness will become an increasingly confronting factor as these issues develop,” he frowned.

Another threatening term often used in these contexts is *nanotechnology* [sic], which refers to a miniaturization of technology allowing applications originally deemed impossible.

It’s rather early to be speculating that nanotechnology will lead to mental illness. It’s not clear that we will have pervasive monitoring of humans of the type that could trigger that. Yes, we need to do arms control, and that will be challenging as weapons shrink. But let’s think about how to do it without uberveillance. At our recent Vision Weekend Unconference, Foresight members explored the concept of a source physical security, which acknowledges the tradeoff between security and privacy, and then tries to optimize that tradeoff rather than just pushing 100% in one direction. —Christine

This entry was posted on Thursday, December 13th, 2007 at 4:30 pm and is filed under [Open Source](#), [Opinion](#), [Ethics](#), [Openness/Privacy](#), [Warfare](#), [Abuse of Advanced Technology](#), [Nanotechnology Politics](#), [Public Involvement](#), [Environment](#), [Health](#), and [Safety](#), [Nanosurveillance](#), [Public participation](#), [Nanotechnology](#), [Nanotech](#), [Nano](#), [Military nanotechnology](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

[2 Responses to “Nanotechnology for surveillance vs. privacy”](#)

1. [Nanoman](#) Says:
[December 14th, 2007 at 6:15 pm](#)

I have pondered this. IF the massive increasing surveillance, nano and nonnano, was used ONLY and PURELY to combat terrorism ALONE, it would not be so bad. But by the nature of people and governments, it will be abused. But the problem is, it’s here growing. What next? Well, what about counter measures? How about nano and electromagnetic devices that interfere with all the surveillance? What about devices that will destroy nano cameras?

2. [N Exile](#) Says:

January 19th, 2008 at 6:41 am

“Privacy is the right to be let alone and is the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized men.”
“Decency, security, and liberty alike demand that government officials shall be subject to the same rules of conduct that are commands to the citizens. In a government of laws, existence of the government will be imperiled if it fails to observe the law scrupulously. Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill it reaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for the law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself; it invites anarchy. To declare that in the administration of the criminal law the end justifies the means—to declare that the government may commit crimes in order to secure the conviction of a private criminal—would bring terrible retribution.”
Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis
If we wish to survive the near future with our rights intact, we must understand the size and the scope of this new threat. We also understand its true identity: our own government. The war on terror is but an excuse to spy on the citizens it is designed to protect. We must end this constitutional chaos and restore as designed a government for the people and by the people, this be the best counter measure to employ.

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